

## **Virginia Trees for Clean Water**

### **Request for Proposal**

Through funds from the USFS Chesapeake Watershed Forestry Program, VDOF has developed a **Virginia Trees for Clean Water** program which is designed to improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay by planting riparian buffers and trees in our neighborhoods and communities.

Projects include tree planting activities of all types: riparian buffer tree planting, community and neighborhood tree plantings etc. Winning proposals will demonstrate the merit of the project and how the trees will be maintained in perpetuity. The objective is to use on-the-ground accomplishments to obtain clean water in the Chesapeake Bay. Funding is available on a 50/50 match basis. In-kind match including volunteer time is permissible.

Grants are awarded through this program to encourage local government and citizen involvement in creating and supporting **long-term** and **sustained** canopy cover. This cycle of grant funds will be used for spring and early fall of 2014 projects.

### **OBJECTIVES of Virginia Trees for Clean Water**

The specific objectives of the program are to:

- To plant trees that restore and improve the waters of the Chesapeake Bay for the benefit of current and future citizens of the Commonwealth
- Achieve long-term improvements in water quality through long-lived tree cover and increased public involvement.
- To raise public awareness about the benefits of planting trees for the health of our streams and rivers

### **ELIGIBLE GRANT PROPOSALS AND CATEGORIES**

Grants may be awarded to local units of government, approved non-profit organizations, community civic organizations, educational institutions or private citizens.

There will be **\$108,000** available to fund projects during the current grant cycle. The recommended funding range for most proposals is **\$1,000 to \$10,000**. The typical proposal is in the **\$5,000 to \$10,000** range. Total project cost (including recipient matching funds or in-kind match) should be at least twice the amount of grant funds requested.



## Proposal Categories

The following project work areas are examples, projects are not limited to these:

- **Riparian tree planting** in non-Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) areas, including urban areas and private lands. These plantings should be an average of 35 feet wide or greater. For riparian plantings we require a minimum of a 35 foot buffer which is usually 3-4 rows of seedlings. The seedlings are generally planted at the spacing of 10 -15 ft centers or 195 to 435 per acre. A maximum of 435 seedlings per acre will be paid for by the grant. Riparian plantings generally need tree protectors as well, because of the deer browse and destruction. The accepted rate per seedling for; providing the seedling, planting labor, using a tree protector, mat, all together is \$9.00/seedling total. This may not be your cost as project needs and requirements differ. When budgeting please use your anticipated real cost.
- **Community tree planting** projects include tree plantings on any public lands. A long term maintenance plan must be included with the grant application.
- **Neighborhood Tree plantings** may be organized by the local civic association or home owners association or by the community government. Projects should be located on common ground or within 35 feet of the road way on private land.
- **NeighborWoods tree plantings**, where citizens in a neighborhood organize themselves for a volunteer focused community tree planting.
- **Turf to Trees projects** where large parcels of turf that are mowed regularly are converted to trees, usually using tree seedlings or small saplings.

**Proposal Format:** Items that should be included in the grant narrative

- Background of project area and description of need
- Organization's experience in completing similar projects.
- Project Description/Scope of Work
- Design plan drawing and Species list
- Deliverables/Milestones
- Expected Outcomes
- Application form, attached
- Budget on attached form
- Long Term Maintenance Plan

### **Deadline:**

**Three copies of the application should be received no later than 5:00 pm, February 13, 2014**

The proposal should not exceed 4 pages. Photos can be included in the proposal. All projects must have written approval from the landowner or an authorized representative of the landowner in the form of a letter as a part of the grant application and prior to funding approval, this letter should also designate the organization responsible for the long term maintenance of the project.

We require local VDOF staff to visit the site and review the project prior to proposal approval. The local VDOF forester should provide a letter of recommendation for the project.

Overhead costs to administer the grant should be allocated as in-kind services (match) versus grant funding, which should be used to implement the project. Overhead costs that will be allowed for match can be negotiated on a project-by-project basis.

Entity receiving the grant must keep all expenditure records and submit copies as part of the reimbursement request.

### **General Criteria**

- Trees for riparian projects should generally be seedlings; other projects may be funded for trees up to 2 inch caliper.
- NO large shade trees shall be planted under power lines.
- A *detailed* long term maintenance plan must be included with each grant application.
- NeighborWoods projects must be carefully planned and technically sound, and involve the assistance of qualified technical experts, agencies, or organizations.
- All projects should include site plan, plant list, tree planting specs, site photos, and a commitment to the project's long-term success from specified personnel or individuals
- Projects should educate participants of the water quality benefits of tree planting.
- Applications should include a letter of permission for the planting, if the project is not on the applicant's personal property.

- There is a 50/50 match requirement
- Projects should include public outreach and engagement components to enhance the benefits of the project and promote those activities as models for others to replicate.
- We require local VDOF staff to visit the site and review the project prior to proposal approval. The local VDOF forester should provide a letter of recommendation for the project.
- Grant funds will not be approved for projects that have been completed or materials that have been purchased prior to grant award
- Grant funds will not be approved for projects that are initiated as a requirement of landscape ordinance, zoning, mitigation etc.
- Trees for all projects should be seedlings or up to 2 inch caliper when approved. The maximum reimbursable cost for 2 inch caliper trees is \$100.00. If higher value trees are purchased that is ok, but the grant will only pay up to \$100.00. When larger caliper trees are approved fewer trees will be planted per acre. The accepted rate per seedling for contract planting: providing the seedling, planting labor, using a tree protector, mat, all together is \$9.00/seedling. This may not be your cost as project needs and requirements differ. When budgeting please use your anticipated real cost.

It is expected that all projects will be maintained for a minimum of 15 years, up to forever.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions or want to discuss a potential project please contact

Barbara White  
900 Natural Resources Dr  
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[barbara.white@dof.virginia.gov](mailto:barbara.white@dof.virginia.gov)

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## **Guidelines for Budget Categories**

### **Project Budget Form**

The Project Budget Form summarizes the project budget. For approved projects, in addition to being part of the project application, this form is an element of the grant agreement and is submitted with the quarterly and final reports. This form is used to record a summary of all expenditures and matching funds. Guidelines for budget categories for project expenses are below.

- Personnel:** Grant funds for personnel charges should only be for staff within the project sponsors organization and for staff members who are directly involved in the project. This category does not include contractual staff. In-kind personnel contributions from project partners may be listed as personnel under the match funds section of the budget. Use the actual annual salary or hourly wage of project staff to determine expenditures and/or match amounts based on estimated time to be spent working on the project.
- Fringe Benefits:** In the financial narrative please provide the percentage used for fringe benefits, and the types of benefits included.
- Travel:** Mileage traveled, travel reimbursements are for actual costs based on organization policies, and is not to exceed those included in the *Commonwealth of Virginia Policies & Procedures, Topic No. 20335, State Travel Regulations*. A vehicle mileage rate of \$.55/mile is used.
- Supplies:** This category includes tangible property items with a per unit cost value of less than \$5,000. These items must be listed in the financial narrative, in sufficient detail to determine if they are reasonable and allowable.
- Contractual:** Contractual costs include subcontracted work to be completed by those other than the project sponsor. This may include design and engineering services.
- Other Direct:** Miscellaneous items. These items must be listed in the financial narrative, in sufficient detail to determine if they are reasonable and allowable.
- Indirect:** No indirect costs will be funded. Indirect charges may be used as project match. The indirect cost rate must be documented in the match narrative and on the budget form, and may be negotiated on a project by project basis.
- Volunteers:** The use of volunteer hours as an in-kind match is acceptable and encouraged. However, volunteer hours must be meticulously documented. You must use the **Volunteer Assistance Time and Activity Log** contained in this package or a form constructed in a similar format. It is essential that we have the date and times for the volunteer's service and his or her signature. If the form is compiled by the volunteer supervisor then it should be **signed** by that person at the bottom. Volunteer hours are valued at the current rate established by the Independent Sector which is \$22.14